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VII.—CONTRACTION IN THE CASE FORMS OF *DEUS*
AND *MEUS*, *IS* AND *IDEM*. A STUDY OF
CONTRACTION IN LATIN *IO*- AND
EO-, *IĀ*- AND *EĀ*- STEMS.

The primary object of the present paper is to discuss the well-known contract forms which are found in the nominative-vocative plural and in the dative-ablative plural of *deus*, in the vocative plural masculine and in the dative-ablative plural of *meus*, and in the nominative plural masculine and the dative-ablative plural of the pronouns *is* and *idem*. In order to form a correct judgment, however, upon the special problem proposed, it will be necessary also to consider briefly the general history of the *io*- and *eo*-, the *iā*- and *eā*- stems in the several case-forms just named.

In the time of Plautus and Terence the original diphthongs *oi* and *ai* of the nominative-vocative and dative-ablative plural had developed into a sound intermediate between *ē* and *ī* which is commonly written *ei*, less frequently *e*, in early Latin inscriptions, and which is usually denoted in modern discussions by the symbol \bar{e} . It was not until later—about 150 B. C.—that this close \bar{e} finally became *ī*. With respect to most *io*- and *iā*- stems, it is now generally admitted that the early dramatists have only the full forms of the nominative-vocative and dative-ablative plural; e. g., only *fīlii* (*fīliei*), *fīliis* (*fīlieis*), *gaudiis*, *gratiis*, *ingratiis*, and that the contract forms like *gratis*, *ingratis*, *fīli*, *fīlis* belong either to the later republic (after 150 B. C.), or to the imperial period. Also in the case of most *eo*- and *eā*- stems, the early dramatists have only the full forms in use; e. g., *aurei* (*aureei*), *aureis* (*aureeis*), *ferrei*, *ferreis*, *balineis* and the like, and we find in fact no evidence of any contraction occurring in these stems at any period.¹

In a small circle, however, of *eo*- and *eā*- stems; viz., in *eo*-, *eā*-, *meo*-, *meā*-, *deo*-, we find that the contract forms were already fully

¹ Of course we find these case-forms treated at times with synizesis in the poets; e. g., Verg., Aen. X 496, *ballēi*; ib. V 352, VIII 553, *aureis*; Sil. XIV 229, *alvēi*.

established in use in the period of the early dramatists. This is very strikingly the case with *dī*, *dīs*, which are the sole forms known to early Latin and to the early Latin poets, while the re-formations *dēi*, *dēis* are products of the literary language and are first found in the period of Catullus. It is highly probable also that the genuine monosyllabic forms *ī* and *īs*, *īdem* and *īsdem* were freely in use in the time of Plautus and Terence, except in the case of the anapaestic word-groups like *sēd-ēī*, *ab-eīs*, *in-eīsdem*.¹ From the year 120 B. C. on the existence of these monosyllabic forms is certainly and abundantly attested by inscriptions, but, as has just been stated, there is good reason to believe that they had come into general use at a still earlier date. It is certain also that the vocative plural masculine *mī* occurs already in Plautus as an absolute monosyllable (Ci. 678; Mi. 1330; cf. Classical Philology III 162). With respect, however, to the early forms of the nominative plural masculine and the dative-ablative plural of *meus* we cannot speak with the same certainty. The full dissyllabic forms *mēī*, *mēis* are of course rare in Plautus, but we are unable to state positively whether the usual dimoric forms *mēī*, *mēis* are absolute monosyllables; i. e., *mī*, *mīs*, or whether, like *mēōs*, *dēōs*, they are only synizesis or quasi-monosyllabic forms which owe their dimoric value to the play of the sentence-accent (Trans. Am. Phil. Assoc. XXXVI 179). The spellings *mīs* and *mīeis* preserved in the Plautus MSS² and the spelling *mīeis* in inscriptions³ forcibly suggest, however, that the dative-ablative plural at least is sometimes an absolute monosyllable in Plautus, and this conclusion is further confirmed by the partly analogical formations *sīs* (Enn., Lucr.) and *tīs* (Inscr. Or. 4847),⁴ and perhaps also by the occurrence of *mēis* in the dialogue verse of Seneca (Troad. 191).

We have then the task of accounting for the foregoing facts and explaining the early forms *dī*, *dīs*, *mī* (vocative plural), *mīs*, *ī*, *īs*, *īdem*, *īsdem* and perhaps *mī* (nominative plural). Several theories upon the origin of these forms have been suggested, but

¹ See Trans. Am. Phil. Assoc. XXXVI (1905), p. 206 f. and n. 1; Sturtevant, *Contraction in Case Forms, etc.*, pp. 26, 34.

² *Mīeis* (monosyllabic) Men. 203 (BC), *mīs* Tri. 822 (BC); cf. *mī is* Ps. 764 and 779 (B); see Neue II³ 366. Sturtevant, l. l., pp. 8, 11, shows clearly that the combination *iei* sometimes represents in Latin inscriptions the sound *ī*.

³ E. g., CIL. I 38; cf. Sturtevant, l. l., pp. 35, 8, 11 ff.

⁴ For the relation of *sīs* to *dīs*, *īs*, *mīs*, cf. Trans., p. 205.

only two seem of sufficient importance to be mentioned here. Thurneysen, Kuhn's *Zeitschrift* XXX (1890), p. 500, has assumed, upon the basis of certain Old Latin forms,¹ that *ē* became *i* before *ei* and that contraction then took place. The obvious objection to this view, in the form in which Thurneysen has stated it, is that the sound group *iē*, in ordinary *iō-* and *iā-* stems, does not contract in the time of Plautus, but is fully preserved in *filiei*, *filieis*, *gratieis*, and the like until about the year 150 B. C. It may be added further that the reduction of the earlier *gratiis* to *gratis*, as of the earlier *larua* (trisyllable) to *larva*, shows the operation of a species of post-tonic syncope (Lindsay, *Lat. Lang.*, pp. 46, 184), while the shortening of *eis* to *is*, in a phrase like *(e)is annis*, is rather to be ascribed to the effects of pretonic syncope.

A second theory has been put forward by Sturtevant, who has discussed the history and use of these contract form with scrupulous care and thoroughness in a valuable monograph entitled, "Contraction in the Case Forms of the Latin *iō-* and *iā-* Stems, and of *deus*, *is* and *idem*", Chicago, 1902.² After rejecting the view of Thurneysen mentioned above, Sturtevant himself assumes (p. 33 f.) that the sound group *eē* 'naturally' contracted into *ē*, and the original forms **deē*, **deēs*, *meē* thus gave rise to *dē*, *dēs*, *mē* (later *dī*, *dīs*, *mī*). This last theory unfortunately, in the form in which it is stated by Sturtevant, admits of precisely the same kind of refutation as the explanation of Thurneysen. For the group *eē*, as has already been stated (p. 336), does not ordinarily contract in Old Latin, and, in a well-known group of words in frequent use, Plautus has only the full forms *aureei* (**aureē*), *aureeis* (**aureēs*), *argenteis*, *ferreei*, *ferreeis*, *balineeis*, *araneis*, *con-sanguineis*, etc. (I mention only forms which actually occur in Plautus.)

¹ Namely, *iei*, *ieis*, *miis* (ascribed to Terence by Velius Longus, p. 77 Keil), *abiegniis* and *aesculniis* (CIL. I 577), also the nominative feminine **mia*, a form which is presupposed by several of the Romance languages.

² Cf. also the convenient summary of this study which is published in *Proc. Am. Phil. Assoc.* XXXII (1901), cxxxi ff. Sturtevant's dissertation is reviewed briefly by Max Niedermann, *Berlin. Phil. Wochenschr.* XXIII (1903), p. 888, who commends the painstaking method and statistics of the work, but adds significantly: "Dagegen scheint der Verf. bei der wissenschaftlichen Verarbeitung seiner Sammlungen daraus nicht den Gewinn gezogen zu haben, der sich tatsächlich daraus ziehen lässt, so dass in Zukunft vielfach andere da ernten werden, wo er gesät hat". A summary of the study is also given by Stolz, *Zeitschr. f. d. Oesterreich. Gymnas.* LIV (1903), p. 503.

It is evident from the foregoing statement that in ordinary cases both the sound group *iĕ* (later *ii*) remained uncontracted in the time of Plautus and the closely allied sound group *eĕ* (later *ei*) continued unchanged throughout historical Latin. It follows, therefore, that the contraction of these groups in the stems *eo-*, *meo-*, *deo-* is exceptional and is connected with some additional factor as an assisting cause. In other words, the vowels *e* or *i* and *ĕ*, although near together in quality, are not absolutely similar; consequently they will not readily merge into a single sound, unless an additional momentum be brought into play. What the additional momentum is, must be clear, as I think, to every student of the Old Latin synizesis phenomena. The law of these phenomena, as I have sought to state it elsewhere (Trans. Am. Phil. Assoc. XXXVI 173 ff.; Classical Philology III 154 ff.) is the following: An *initial* iambic sequence containing the semivowels *i* (*e*) and *u* in hiatus tends within the sentence towards a monosyllabic pronunciation (e. g. *mēōs*, *ēis*, *ēisdem*), but does not actually assume this value. At the close of the sentence, however, the schwa-vowel is still distinctly heard (e. g. *mēōs*, *ēis*).

It is the concurrence then of two causes which produces absolute monosyllabic forms, viz.: (1) the tendency toward a slurred pronunciation of every *initial* iambic sequence which involves hiatus; e. g., *dēōs*, *dēō*, *dēi*, and, in extreme cases, towards the consonantization and ultimate loss of the semivowel; e. g., *d(y)i*, *d(y)is*, *m(y)i*, *m(y)is*,¹ (2) the tendency toward the contraction of vowels which are nearly related in quality.² In other words, contraction may take place as a further development of synizesis in those cases where the vowels which

¹ Cf. the vulgar forms *do*, *dae* (Schuchardt Vok. II, 463; III, 298), which show a similar loss of the semivowel, and also the frequent inscriptional forms of late Latin, viz. *des* (for *dies*), *zes*, *de*, *debus*, *dis*, *dibus* (Schuchardt II, 445; III, 295; I, 67 ff.; II, 513 f.; III, 310; Seelmann, Ausspr. d. Lat. 239, 321 ff.); cf. also Oscan *zicolom* for **dieculom* (Buck, Grammar of Oscan and Umbrian § 134, a). It should be remembered that synizesis is a broad term and the synizesis process is an elastic one. Old Latin synizesis was undoubtedly in the main 'the running together of two vowels without full contraction' (Trans., p. 170 ff.), but again it was sometimes complete diphthongalization (cf. *ēi*, dative singular), and sometimes complete consonantization (e. g. *dvellum*, *jō*).

² In Umbr. the close *ĕ* resulting from *oi* in final syllables was so near in quality to *i* as to actually contract with it in the Dat. Sg. and the Dat.-Abl. Pl of stems in *ĭo-*; thus we have Dat.-Abl. Pl. *Atiersir* beside *Atiersier*.

occur in hiatus are closely related in quality, or the shortened form may even in some cases arise as the result of consonantization; e. g., $d[y]i$, $d[y]o$, $d[y]es$. In the time of Plautus, however, these processes were limited to those cases of $e\bar{e}$ or $i\bar{e}$ which occurred in an initial iambic sequence. In addition, since synizesis occurs most freely in well-worn and familiar proclitic word (Trans., pp. 184 ff., 210; Classical Philology III 157, 164), it follows that contraction also is especially natural in the pronominal forms i , is , $idem$, $isdem$, mi , mis .

The contract forms di , dis call for some further notice;¹ for it is evident that the contraction which has taken place in these cases is not only more complete and more thoroughgoing than that which is admissible, for example, in $reis$ (from $reus$) and in $viis$ and $piis$ (from via and $pius$),² but even more rigorously carried out than the reduction which appears in the case-forms of the pronouns. As I have briefly suggested elsewhere (Trans., p. 181, n. 1), the tendency towards monosyllabic pronunciation which affects so strongly all the iambic forms of $deus$ (e. g. $deos$, $deum$, deo), seems largely due to an extremely frequent and trite use of the word in oaths, adjurations and prayers, and hence may be fitly compared with the reduction which is seen in English oaths like *odd's death*, *'s death*, *zounds*, *pardy*, *perdy* (Old Fr. *pardie*, *pardé*; Fr. *par di*, *par dieu*),³ as well as with the quick exclamatory utterance of such English phrases as '*God forbid*', '*God be praised*', '*I thank God*'.

I am disposed to conjecture further that the exclusive monosyllabic form has arisen first in the exclamatory vocative di , and then been extended by analogy to the nominative and the dative-ablative plural. It is true that the nominative plural is the more frequent form, occurring three times as often in Plautus as the vocative plural, yet the latter is also extremely trite and familiar.⁴

¹ The derivation from *divi*, *divis* which is sometimes doubtfully proposed (e. g. Lindsay, Capt., p. 27), might perhaps explain the forms di , dis , but scarcely accounts satisfactorily for the *absence* of the forms dei , $deis$.

² The nominative plural masculine of an adjective like *pius* or *meus* is also preserved from thoroughgoing contraction by the influence of the dissyllabic feminine and neuter forms; e. g., (*mei*), *meae*, *mea*.

³ Cf. also the proper name *Parsall* (*Par ciel*), and Fr. *morbleu*, *parbleu*, *palsambleu*, and the like.

⁴ According to Lodge, *Lex. Plaut.*, the nominative plural occurs two hundred and thirty-one times in Plautus, the vocative plural seventy-five times.

It is also highly emotional and exclamatory in its use, and may be compared in this respect with such monosyllabic ejaculations as the English 'Fire!', 'Help!', 'Stop!', and similar expressions. Hence the physiological difficulty of uttering two nearly similar vowels in hiatus may well have reached its maximum in this form, as well as in the vocative plural *mi* (p. 337),¹ and the conditions which are most favorable to thoroughgoing contraction were thus presented in both cases. We may note in this connection familiar exclamations like *di, vostram fidem* (Cap. 418, Ci. 259, etc.), and illustrate the general use of the vocative by Mer. 850 date, *di*, quaesio; Ru. 1298 *di*, quaesio, subvenite, etc. Having once arisen in the vocative plural, we may conjecture that the contract form would quickly be extended to the nominative plural and to the dative-ablative plural, especially as the latter forms often receive the same emphatic and emotional utterance in prayers, imprecations and expressions of joy and thanksgiving. These familiar uses may be sufficiently illustrated by the following: As. 46 *di* tibi dent quaequomque optes; St. 469 *di* dent quae velis; Tri. 992 *di* te perdant, si te flocci facio; Poe. 1254 *dis* est aequom gratias nos agere; Ci. 624 *dis* hercle habeo gratiam.

To sum up the conclusions of this discussion: In the case of vowels in hiatus closely related in quantity (*eē* and *iē*), contraction took place as a further development of synizesis in those trite and well-worn pronominal forms like *ē*, *ēs*, *ēdem* and *mē*, which originally showed the initial iambic sequence. Under similar conditions a still more complete reduction occurred in the forms *dē*, *dēs*, which are not only trite and familiar, but inclined by their very meaning to emotional and exclamatory utterance.²

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¹Cf. also the unusual contraction of *ie* which is seen in vocative singular *mī* (from **mie*), and in vocatives like *fili*, *Corneli*.

²On a possible consonantization *d[y]ē*, *d[y]ēs* in some cases, see above, p. 339.